

My 2018 Holiday Gift List: An End-of-Year Message from Paul Hermanson, MEUW Board President

Happy holidays and seasonal cheer to all of you.

I've been racking my brain all year for the perfect gifts for each of you on my Christmas list. I'm a simple man with limited resources, but here's what I'm giving you. I hope you appreciate and cherish these gifts always.

First and foremost:

- To all the fine employees I get to work with – My voice. I will always use it to express my strong support and sincerest thanks for your hard work, dedication to serving our residents, commitment to each other, and for making me look good when I mess up.
- To the members of MEUW – A one-million-watt spotlight. The future of MEUW is very bright, and you'll want to see it all. Thanks for your support.
- To all the employees of MEUW – The light switch to the one-million-watt spotlight. You are the ones making the light shine brightly. Keep up the great work. Thanks.

Next:

- To teachers and all members of our school staff at every level – All the apples you will ever need or want. Thanks for sharing your unique talents and your devotion to providing quality education.
- To firefighters and police officers – Anything you want. Thanks for doing a job few people have the courage to do.
- To the people who call with compliments and to say thanks (both of you) – My ear, figuratively. Thanks for taking the time to call. You have no idea how appreciated and motivating your calls are.
- To the people who call to complain or vent their anger – My other ear, figuratively. Thanks for your calls too. Although it is difficult to listen to criticism, there is always value in listening, understanding your perspective and maintaining direct communication.
- To the Milwaukee Brewers – One more standing ovation. That was a fun season. Thanks. Let's do it again next year.

Then:

- To the nice lady who calls me every couple of weeks and asks the same three questions – The answers... again. No, we're not having a blackout. Yes, he's a really nice guy. You'll have to check your own breakers.
- To the guy who keeps letting his dog crap on my lawn (yes, I know who you are) – A free diagnosis. Your dog has worms or something really nasty.
- To my cell phone provider – Time, I'll save you some. No, I don't need a new phone, but thanks for asking again, and again, and again, and again...
- To the guy who pumps the septic tank – New, clean gloves. Thanks for doing a really dirty job and being so suspiciously chipper about it. However, I would appreciate it if you would change gloves before you shake my hand.
- To the people at the local pharmacy who know me by my first name – My text contact information. Now you won't have to describe drug side effects so loudly that everyone in the building can hear. I'll see you next week.
- To the engineer of the train idling in my backyard – A hearing aid. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to see what the sky looks like at 3 a.m. each Sunday morning! I've grown fond of the soothing sound of a 2,500-horsepower diesel engine shaking the dishes in our cupboard. Now you can hear it too.

And finally:

- To my dad – A wry smile. Thanks for sharing your sense of humor. I wouldn't have made it this far without it.
- To my fantastic family – My heart.

Sincerely,

Paul Hermanson
President, MEUW Board of Directors